WIT AND WISDOM OF CHRISTIANITY

J. FREEMAN HOWARD

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WIT AND WISDOM OF CHRISTIANITY

by

J. FREEMAN HOWARD

"Know then thyself, presume not God to scan
The proper study for mankind is MAN."

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DEDICATION.

To all those desirous of attaining a sublime understanding of the "Grand Old Book" which heretofore may have seemed so unfathomable, and still so wonderfully uplifting, the author humbly dedicates this volume.

FOREWORD.

This is not a book of opinion concerning traditions, beliefs, customs, ceremonies or forms promoted by man. It is a book pertaining to Life, speaking the "Truth" of the human heart which is the true Light of every man.

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WIT AND WISDOM OF CHRISTIANITY

WIT DEFINED.

Wit—"What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed."—*Pope.*

"Wit is a propriety of thoughts and words; or, in other terms, thoughts and words elegantly adapted to the subject."—*Dryden.*

WISDOM DEFINED.

"Incredulity is the source of all wisdom."—*Aristotle.*

"Wisdom consists in tracing ignorance, back as far as possible."—*Royer Collard.*

EVOLUTION OF FAITH.

"He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul."—*Prov. XV.*32.

Beginning with a mere character or letter, the school-boy in seeking an education assumes an attitude of willingness to learn by carefully following instructions and taking for granted the statements of his teacher without questioning their truth.

Progressing day by day he soon acquires an idea, and then positive knowl-

edge concerning things which he accepted in the beginning only through the agency of FAITH.

The extent of knowledge obtained is proportioned to the faithfulness with which he accepts and retains instruction from the time he first sees the letters take on the form of words, until the words through his sense of perception evolve into objects; then by intuition his mind naturally broadens into a greater scope of understanding, through which he entirely loses sight of the "letter" by realizing the "subject" as readily as he at first perceived the character or letter.

A general knowledge thus attained qualifies him for the higher studies which must be followed in the development of any profession he may select.

With renewed ambition he again starts as a "school-boy" of science and is assigned to a class where he must exhibit the same degree of faith and willingness with which he entered upon his studies as a pupil of the "letter;" but now possessing the advantages of a student, he soon acquires new opinions, which, by the further development of his faculties, gradually unfold into facts and understanding.

At this point he emerges from the schools of instruction with the "reward of knowledge" attained only through faith, willingness and effort.

Enlisting in the great "army of progress" he assumes command of the practical application of his talents by which he acquires the necessities and luxuries of life, but resigns their greater development of "Wisdom" to the guiding hand of FAITH.

> And "His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."—*Matt. XXV.*21.

FINDING WISDOM.

"Wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness."—*Eccl. II.*13.

Every person has two educations, one of which he receives by instruction from others, and a more important one he acquires through experience and self-culture. Therefore a man re-entering the field of learning, in search of Wisdom, finds himself confronted with the same requisites of faith, willingness and effort which were expected of him in his earlier work, with the exception, how-

ever, that becoming his own instructor the entire Faith must be placed in himself.

Delving into the literary works of the world for reference and instruction he finds that the greatest authors and compilers exhibit a wonderful inward assurance of the correctness of their own ideas and opinions regarding temporal affairs, but upon the Greater things of universal interest they treat indefinitely, and invariably refer to the Scriptures as the Inspired source of information.

Concluding that the Bible possesses Superior Knowledge he decides to seek its instruction as a "school-boy" of

Christianity, and upon finding that the Scriptures tell what the reward of multiplying one's talents shall be, assumes that somewhere therein he will find how or what to do to attain the reward.

Proceeding upon this course with the same degree of willingness and faith he is not only rewarded by understanding the simple things, but by obedience to its precepts, his mind gradually awakens to the great conceptions which have been in store for him, until he understands the truth and reality of the deepest teachings disclosed in the "Beautiful Story" of the future.

"Seek, and ye shall find."—*Luke XI.9.*

"Christianity is not a theory or speculation, but a life and a living process."
—*Coleridge.*

"The Christian has greatly the advantage of the unbeliever, having everything to gain and nothing to lose."—*Byron.*

"Whatever makes men good Christians, makes them good citizens."—*Daniel Webster.*

SIDE LIGHTS ON CHRISTIANITY.

"Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding."—*Prov. IX.*6.

The prizes of Life are sought by all men, and yet there are many who refuse to take any active part in the great race through the expectation that some one will bring them the reward they hope for; in this way burying their talents and overlooking the fact that others have their own to account for.

We find various theories advanced as to the true meaning of Christianity; but

the Scripture teaching clearly shows that Christianity is the science of "Life," and not simply "the science of human duty and the duty of man to man," as claimed by Ingersoll.

To BE a Christian is to understand the "Divine Realization" from which the Scriptures were written, and Ingersoll's failure in pointing out the "Mistakes of Moses" serves to illustrate the want of this principle of human attainment so little understood, as

> "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."—*Matt. VII.*14.

The human understanding will never need to be exerted to a maximum to decide whether it was Moses or Ingersoll that knew Christ.

From the works of Ingersoll we see that in reading the Bible from a purely literal and material point of view he failed to realize the true spirit of its meaning, and through the limitation of perception condemned it; but we must admit that he was possessed with a mind sufficiently strong to forestall the acceptance of traditional theories, exploited in so perplexing a manner that not only the average person becomes thoroughly bewildered, but even the

great mind of Ingersoll abandoned the idea of ever being able to understand.

> "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise."—1 *Cor. III.*18.

From the works of Moses it may be clearly seen that the failure of Ingersoll to interpret properly the teachings of the Old Testament was due to the "Mistake of Ingersoll" in failing to remove the "vail" which the Scriptures plainly tell us exists even unto this day "when Moses is read"; clearly showing that the fault was in Ingersoll and not in the Bible, and fully demonstrating that

"the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."—2 *Cor. III.*6.

Thomas Paine may have perceived the future greatness of our country more clearly than any other man of his time, but the writings of this natural revolutionist plainly show that even his great scope of perception was confined to things MATERIAL.

> "For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."—2 *Cor. IV.*18.

Spencer tells us that religion is a "theory of the unknown" but as everything a man knows nothing about is a theory to him, we find no consolation in

accepting this view and must assume that it is another honest attempt to enlighten the world on a subject, not having known the Subject.

> "For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known."—*Luke XII.2.*

All men are endowed with special talents and many appear very proficient, but we should not take for granted that they have all multiplied the PARTICULAR talents meriting reward.

The atheist represents the servant who hid his lord's talent in the earth through a lack of Faith to believe in and *then* realize its true value, and we can-

not expect to be instructed from such sources concerning the great realization of Christianity.

"Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees."—*Mark VIII.*15.

Obstinacy is a subsoil of human character which supports atheism and infidelity; this should be dispelled and supplanted by sufficient faith to enable the sinner to "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image that created him."—*Col. III.*10.

The man who has no opinion of his own lacks individuality, and is a living automaton without the interesting features of modern mechanism.

The wise man changes his mind, but a fool has none to change and we find by the Scriptures that this was known ages ago and reduced to a proverb, and if we care to adopt a hint intended for us we will be profited by it.

"Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words."
—*Prov. XXIII.*9.

THE PROFESSIONAL CHRISTIAN.

> "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me."—*Matt. XV.*8.

One of the greatest difficulties encountered by Christianity was, and is, that it is so much easier to claim to be than to BE; and looking into the nature of human things one cannot but notice the striking difference displayed by members of congregations in nearly all churches.

It reminds one of looking into a great garden where we find trees bearing fruit

of different kinds; some of which present a scant display of foliage but a very abundant supply of fruit, showing a "pure" condition of inward development; while on the other hand the predominating kind compares with the fig trees of India which Pliny tells us have a foliage of leaves "as broad as targets, but fruit no bigger than a bean."

The person making the great outward display of the "foliage" of Christianity entirely overlooks the fact that out of the windows in the heart of his monstrous body there looks the "small fruit," sustained only by what little light shines through the crevices in a

cloak of hypocrisy about him; and for his lean and feeble soul the self-seeking "professional" Christian expects to inherit a "Crown of Glory" and Eternal Life, as a tribute from his Creator in exchange for his "outward" appearances and the supposed good of his presence in church.

"For man looketh on the outward appearances, but the Lord looketh on the heart."—1 *Sam. XVI.*7.

Christianity is founded upon Faith, Honesty and Truth, and a prayer from the pew of a hypocrite is an abomination to God and an insult to Christianity,

as the Faith must be in the person and not in the creed.

"When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it."—*Eccl. V.*4.

Some go to church occasionally as if by mechanical prompting and no matter how accurately and faithfully the text may be exploited, or how excellent the sermon, unless it relates to a topic appealing to their material nature it takes no root; for the soil is "barren" in the church-goer who leaves his Faith behind, and serves Satan under a brilliant cloak of righteousness which makes the "small" man appear great only when he

agrees with the multitude. But these shall be divided

> "as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left."—*Matt. XXV.*32-33.

Many of these "Scribes and Pharisees" can be found among the "members" of various congregations, and having less faith than the school-boy, deny that any positive knowledge of Christianity can be had more than a mere belief in the statements of others. The result is that men stay at home or sleep during the services, while the women vie in the domains of fashion and

without making any effort to understand for themselves, simply resign their future welfare to the hands of time and fate, having but a vague and uncertain hope by refusing to place any Faith in things "unseen."

> "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation."—*Luke XVII.*20.

Such classes are not only indisposed to go to church, but find fault after being there and scoff at the idea of having faith in anything but material things which they can see and easily understand, and by contributing a few dollars per annum for a comfortable seat

or pew in the parish church they expect their future welfare will be well cared for by their pastor and that the Kingdom of Heaven may be reached without walking the "strait and narrow" path.

"Every one of us shall give account of himself to God."—*Rom. XIV.*12.

All men differ to some extent in understanding the meaning of language, and this is due chiefly to the state of moral and intellectual development, the advanced stages of which place a clear and accurate construction upon it, which enables them to comprehend the GREAT things in a saying, while others see noth-

ing in it and call it foolishness. The latter class we find measuring everything with the "short" tapeline they carry, which never reaches around anything greater than "foolishness," and as the old standard has afforded them so much satisfaction its use, we presume, will be continued.

"In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride."—*Prov. XIV.3.*

BODY AND SOUL.

"Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."—*Is. LV.*2.

The man who feeds the body and starves the soul can be compared with a cart having a large wheel on one side and a small one on the other, both are all right for the side-hill work; but they are very unevenly balanced when either at the top or the bottom; the fault in either one can be remedied at once by

acquiring a little higher development on the lowly developed side.

"To the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."—*Prov. XXVII.7.*

We should not allow our thoughts to sink where they should rise, but study the "Lessons of Life" seriously as they guide man's mind into the "One Way" of profitable research by which he becomes awakened to a consciousness beyond that confined to the gratification of the senses and is enabled to banish the distrust of his own abilities and be a whole man at everything.

"Fear not them which kill the body," "but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body."—*Matt. X.28.*

Doubt will cramp the energy while Faith will expand it.

"Faith means to believe something we cannot see, the reward of which is to have our belief fulfilled"; and the Scriptures define it as "the assurance of things hoped for, and the conviction of things not seen."

Every righteous effort put forth aids us to kill a doubt in our own ability to attain a greater altitude of Faith, which serves as the principal Light in following the "narrow path" upon which so many founder on their earthly voyage.

Belief is the incipient power of

TRUTH, and is the essential feature for the future welfare of mankind.

Christianity is the link, or tie, connecting man with his Creator and the Bible serves as a guide-post on every corner of the journey pointing the way to Eternal Life, and like the guide-post never starts off in the direction it points, but remains on duty to enlighten every traveler on his way to God's world.

To stand still before the guide-post is to give up hope, as the destination will certainly not be reached without further effort on our part; and although the fortunate have always been willing to lend a helping hand to the victims of

accident, industry absolutely refuses to support idleness.

"The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom."—*Prov. X.*21.

The Bible has withstood all the conflicts between the principles of theology and science, and still stands, silently holding forth the same Divine reward to enrich the hearts of all mankind who drink in the true meaning of its Sacred Words which repetition has never weakened, and criticism and historical research have failed to remove from their exalted position, around which all humanity gather, when they seek the true

medium of God's revelation of Redeeming Love for the world.

Its teaching is very explicit throughout that man must accomplish a great work to enjoy a higher state of existence, and no where in it do we find that sitting in the seat of idleness, or basking in the sunshine of expectancy will attain for us the true realization of its precepts.

We cannot, therefore, look to the intellectual or historical knowledge of who the first man and woman were and when or where they existed as a means of Redemption; for if the wonderful allegory of Adam and Eve and the Garden of

Eden should be limited to such a senseless view as this, the Bible as a medium of Salvation would long since have been counted among the useless relics of mankind.

It may be possible that the influence of superstition and fear, the remaining relics of barbarism and idolatry, are still of sufficient strength to divert the attention of the present generation from a more extended and careful study of the Inspired Teachings, but the clearness of man's own reasoning should prevent him from accepting traditional theories and antiquated creeds held forth by some worshipper of a material idol, or

some false prophet entertaining a misconception of spiritual truth, the true sense-meaning of which can be heard only by listening to the voice of the Bible, which speaks the Luminous words of revealed knowledge with Divine authority, unaffected by outward influence or primitive conception.

> "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 *Cor. III.*11.

There is but one destination at which we can possibly arrive if we allow ourselves to start and continue in the wrong direction, and any attempt to follow tradition and idolatry leads up to a point

from which we may descend by any one of many roads.

We must acknowledge that it is the Larger and Grander meaning, within the words of the Scriptures, that continues to hold "the flaming sword," which as a guide for us at all times points forward, indicating the "Way" of life, and the manner in which we should apply the powers and faculties with which we are endowed if we would attain that degree of Eternal Knowledge so beautifully expressed and faithfully recorded in the Sacred Book.

A fool is self-sufficient, while the wise man goes on gathering wisdom; so do

not wrap the tree of your mind with the wire of refusal and prevent its development, as the laws of God are natural and unchangeable.

The Christian world acknowledges the Bible to be true, therefore an investigation of its truth and the elucidation of it is not considered sacrilegious. Our Creator gave us true minds that we might not look at things in a perverted light; the Bible and the mind being perfect works of God let us violate neither, but if our minds are dwarfed let us develop them.

The instructor interested in teaching a boy who does not want to learn serene-

ly descends to a plane where the mentality can be exerted in an effective and deserving manner, thus making a gentleman and a scholar out of nothing. But the unruly scholars of Christianity have grown so large and strong, so unconcerned and shiftless concerning the school of Life that the great Teachers are no longer found amongst us but have left the Scriptures with which to re-establish the "Age of Enlightenment" by living lives in keeping with Nature's laws.

Exercise the mind and engage the heart and you will soon find it possible to survey "This Higher World" of

thought from a moral and intellectual elevation which places you within reach of the sphere in life which Providence has assigned for you.

Bear in mind, without a thought of fame, that Christ has continually led the way and holds the extended hand of help to all who will concentrate their energies to attain the altitude in Life which can be reached by self-development through inward assurance and Faith, without affecting the happiness of mankind.

"For whoso findeth me findeth life."—*Prov. VIII.*35.

If we have misinterpreted the Bible let us learn where and how we have done so. Hearsay is not proof and man should not be satisfied until he knows for himself, as the Master gives us no license to depend upon others or external doings as a means of redemption, but says,

"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved."—*John X.*9.

"It is a great dishonor to religion to imagine that it is an enemy to mirth and cheerfulness, and a severe exacter of pensive looks and solemn faces."—*Walter Scott.*

"Joy is more divine than sorrow, for joy is bread and sorrow is medicine."—*Beecher.*

"Earth hath no sorrow that heaven cannot heal."—*Moore.*

JOY, NOT SORROW.

"Eat thy bread with joy."—*Eccl. IX.7.*

Job tells us that "all the sons of God shouted for joy" and we should not assume that they lost their piety by doing so; as

> "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones."—*Prov. XVII.22.*

Erroneous ideas are in vogue as to the outward appearance a Christian should assume; some believing it improper to carry even a small supply of genuine humor, and by adhering to this policy

they confine the mortal joys of man to those having no regard for their Creator.

"A man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry:"—*Eccl. VIII.*15.

Christianity does not mean a long face upon which tears of piety must run without a rippling joy of life; and the Sacred Scriptures in no way condemns the enjoyment and pleasures of man, but undertakes to increase them, as is well illustrated by many precepts.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."—*John XV.*11.

Many think it necessary to have patches on their knees and purses without scrip, while others believe they should look out of Jacob's membrane through the spectacles of a pessimist and continually exhibit the feeling that the end of righteousness is almost at hand.

Sorrow is an invention contrived by the enemy of man and while all of us have some of it, we should not make it a point to entertain such bad company.

"Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart."—*Eccl. XI.*10.

A theological pessimist deserves the greatest pity and should be extended the helping hand, until he has attained

a safe foothold upon the "foundation of the Prophets and Apostles," when some of their great aphorisms might be gently spoken of and the perfection of creation considered.

We all have a feeling that there is nothing too good for us, yet we never fully enjoy a thing until we know how good it is, and a failure to understand Christianity precludes us from the enjoyment of a real comfort.

"Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad."—*Prov. XII.*25.

INTELLECTUAL LIFE.

"But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."—*Matt. XV.9.*

The "Wheat" should be preserved by rooting up the "tares."

Christianity undertakes to do this and makes no distinction for those existing in the minds of even the men we call great.

The number of links in a chain of logic will not increase its strength but their multiplicity confuses the mind and en-

lists attention that might be spent to better advantage, for as soon as the weak link has been discovered the value of the chain is destroyed.

While this pursuit may be very pleasant and interesting it is not found good enough, and we long for a "Rock" to stand on instead of the sinking sand on the desert of logic.

> "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."—*Col. II.*8.

Logic is good in its place but it is limited, and when Saul saw a Greater Light

than logic he became a servant of IT and refused to recognize the authority of those not possessing IT.

Thousands have crossed the waters and journeyed through the burning sand to what tradition calls the "holy land"; here they have looked upon the lake of Galilee, walked the streets of Jerusalem and visited the little village of Nazareth.

While the journey may have been delightful and pleasant, history fails to record a single instance where any one has returned with any tangible evidence or solid information, which, to some seems inexplicable; but before beginning the voyage these people may never

have read as much as a single chapter of the New Testament with understanding, and in the second place they are among the class of unconscious materialists listening to the veritable creatures of "obstinacy" who have also existed since Bible times, speaking with man's voice.

> "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."—*Matt. XV.*14.

These people having the "limited idea" of the Savior believe that He was born only two thousand years ago, and lived but thirty-three years, at the close of which He was crucified at the hands of a peculiar sect, and that this consti-

tuted an atonement for the sins of the whole world in a vicarious sense.

"Before Abraham was, I am."—*John VIII.*58.

This idea exists, even among the classes we call educated, and we frequently find them making the long journey to a place where they willingly call upon and support the charlatans of Christianity, who for ages have furnished all the convincing proof required by credulity.

The demand created the supply and the fakirs of Palestine have contrived interesting features, and all religious

relics necessary to part the fool and his money.

These people return with hearts engaged in perusing the pages of ancient history. Josephus is read from end to end, and to their astonishment not a single tradition they have heard is related in it.

Investigation shows that all manner of excuses have been made and unjust criticism heaped upon Josephus for his failure to give an historical account of the life and works of Christ, and some one feeling an imaginary sting by his inconceivable silence undertook to complete the history of the Jews by insert-

ing a chapter into his work promoting the materialistic idea of Christ, which, being false, naturally fell of its own weight.

The Bible being perfect and complete in itself, sheds its own light, and no other proof is necessary except our understanding of it, which enables us to KNOW its truth, and to KNOW a thing is perfect proof and gives a complete satisfaction, not afforded by Palestine or the captivating fables of antiquity.

Until the true Light is in our hearts we are without Him, and need to be awakened from the Adamic sleep, that we may hear the voice of the Lord. Man

evolves into greater perceptions every day in life, and as we look back over the past we know not what the future still has in store for us, but as we have always found more and more, and realized new things in succession we have a right to anticipate that we may know more than our pride now considers the summit, for the river of Life has been crossed heretofore, and we have a record of the swirls to be met by ourselves, which should be thoroughly understood that we may not go as "sheep to the slaughter."

It is commonly believed that Christianity began with the Christian era, but

by the true understanding of the Scriptures its origin may be traced back to the beginning of man's existence.

> "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or even the earth was."
> —*Prov. VIII.*23.

Christ is the true Light born in and to the human heart, and the recipients of this Light are called Christians, but the true meaning of a Christian has been so perverted that a belief commonly prevails that the great men of the past were instructed by a personal teacher whose sayings they repeated, instead of speaking their own words from

personal knowledge through the gift of this realization to their hearts.

> "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"—2 *Cor. XIII.*5.

A glance at the chronological order of the Bible should serve to throw enough light to disperse such errors, but as we are in an age of "reason" instead of a "spiritual" age it must be presumed that the intellect will not be satisfied to be taught by the Spirit, for it is limited to the domain of theories and arguments and always guesses about Infinite things while a mind illumined by Him KNOWS.

Jesus means "that which will save us from our sins" and is a synonym of the word Immanuel. Many have doubts about being saved, and are unconscious of the immortality of their souls which shows that the "True Light,"

> "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."—*John I.9.*

is not in their hearts.

The words Jesus and Christ are also synonyms. Jesus Christ has always existed, exists now, and will continue to exist, "The same yesterday, and today, and forever," not as a physical being, but as the Spirit of God in the hearts of men.—*Heb. XIII.8.*

This is beautifully symbolized in the allegorical words

> "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?"—*John XIV.9.*

If a trip to Palestine would purify our hearts, and quicken our devotion to Truth and induce a greater possession of morality and righteousness by which we might open the door of our hearts and let Him in it would, indeed, be profitable, but the perfection of creation makes all lands "holy" and it is unnecessary for the "pure in heart" to seek God in the fields of Palestine.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me." —*Rev. III.*20.

The Biblical meaning of NAZARETH is not a topographical location, but has a special meaning when interpreted, signifying to "branch" out into perfection, or become "sanctified" by the possession of a pure heart, which gives man a true knowledge of his Eternal inheritance in the Kingdom of God and constitutes the birth of the Savior in his heart by which he becomes the image and likeness of God as described in Genesis, and called "His Son" in the New

Testament, and the PROCESS OF UNFOLDMENT by which this result is obtained is called NAZARETH.

Christ is "raised" or "formed" in us. Read Gal. IV.19 and I Cor. XV.17. Nazareth produces the Savior, and He comes into the individual consciousness through the natural laws of evolution, after which, man has conquered mortality and is redeemed from sin and "death," thereby entering triumphantly into the NEW Jerusalem, which means Eternal Life, instead of remaining in the "Old City" which is sure to be destroyed.

"All things are possible to him that believeth."—*Mark IX.*23.

THE VAIL OF MOSES.

"Unto the Jews a stumbling block."—
1 *Cor. I.*23.

The Scriptures plainly state that "there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."—*I Cor. XV.*44. The meaning of the "SPIRITUAL" is the attainment of immortal consciousness, as explained in I Cor. XV.47, and is beautifully illustrated in the third chapter of John by the parable to Nicodemus, upon whose heart the "vail" of Moses still remained.

The "vail" of Moses symbolizes the misinterpretation of Divine Law by the Jews, upon which they formed the basis for their religious conduct; and while proceeding under this false impression they lost sight of the true understanding of the teachings of Moses, thereby drifting from a generation of Prophetic realization, down to a plane of heathenism where they completely sacrificed their own spiritual development in seeking the sins of others and inflicting the penalties of vengeance, which they supposed were provided for, by the literal interpretation of "an eye for an eye" and a "tooth for a tooth."

"Recompense to no man evil for evil."
—*Rom. XII.*17.

Continuing on this plane as slaves to their own passions, sin grew to mean any outward manifestation contrary to their mistaken ideas; and was immediately met and punished by inflicting the penalties of persecution; eventually resulting in the annihilation of every semblance of Divine realization attained by the Prophets, thereby plunging the "prophetic age" and its glory into the depths of darkness and despair.

"But their minds were blinded;" "even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart."—2 *Cor. III.* 14-15.

This impregnable "vail" fortified the hearts of the Jews against any new attainment of character or development of mind and promoted the advance of their false doctrine in following the "tradition of the elders" on their memorable march through the great abyss of time bridging the period of oblivion existing between Prophetic and Apostolic revelation.

> "Heaven and earth shall pass away,
> but my words shall not pass away."
> —*Matt. XXIV.*35.

The records of time fail to reveal the exact duration of the period covering the supposed dormant condition of Di-

vine realization, as no expression of its existence was possible while the "vail" remained.

But the Divine Inspiration was cherished in the hearts of men as a "hidden wisdom"

> "The hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world."—1 *Cor. II.*7.

during its silent evolution as evidenced in the fact that it burst forth and created a new era of civilization, fulfilling the prophecy of the Old Testament, by the presence of Christ, "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us"—*Col. II.*14, lifting the "vail

of Moses'' through the glorious realization and perfection developed in the Apostles, giving us the New Testament, which abolishes the Jewish tradition of ''literal interpretation'' and proclaims the true conception of ''prophetic writings'' in the Sermon on the Mount.

> ''For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven.''—*Matt. V.*20.

The New and Old Testament being alike with the exception of forms of language used to express the same mean-

ing. Read Matt. *V.*17-18. The same evolution and development of Divine inspiration attained by the Prophets was *re-realized* by the Apostles, this being how it was known that the New Testament was the fulfillment of the Old, and also accrediting the Prophets and Apostles with the Divine authorship of the Holy Scriptures, which is shown by many of its passages.

The question might here arise as to why the Divine realization did not continue and assume a broader scope at this time. But in answering we only have to refer to the historical past, when the moral and educational facilities for

the enlightenment of Christianity were condemned by the Roman emperors as superstition and heresy, for which the severest penalties known in the annals of persecution were inflicted.

While ignorance may serve somewhat as a commutation, it must be said, that the darkest stains on the pages of history rest upon the heads of the Roman tyrants, who, for centuries, employed every available means to exterminate the teaching of Christianity and annihilate the Christians by which the Temple of God was forsaken and the "True Light" abandoned for the burning lakes of heathenism, culminating in the "Dark

Ages'' when innocent blood sacrifices were made and idols of heathenism worshiped by the sects, while superstitious creeds and the influence of priest-craft divided the localities and parted the nations, involving dissensions and strife, wars and persecution resulting in the destruction of *Belief* and *Faith* in Christian realization after which it again vanished by the darkness of degeneracy.

> ''Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.''—*Gal. VI.7.*

As tyranny provoked the inevitable point of resistance and gave way, the reinstatement of Christianity gradually

progressed until the understanding of its truth has become somewhat re-realized through the moral and educational facilities adopted under the ruling power of freedom and encouraged by the liberty of speech which has afforded a suitable foundation upon which Christianity could build the firm and stable platform whereon all men may stand in equal light before the eyes of their Creator.

"Judge not that ye be not judged, for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged."—*Matt. VII.*1-2.

FAITH AS THE FOUNDATION.

"Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."—1 *Cor. III.*10.

There is certainly no necessity for overstepping the laws of Nature in reading the Bible, so do not think you must look far into the past to study the future, but keep its Light closer to yourself and your mind will soon grasp the true meaning of its parables and allegories and the truth of these great object lessons will assert itself in a more forcible manner than letters and words

can express. Therein you will find the teaching that one cannot do for another nor shoulder his folly and sins, but that each must do for himself and work out his own salvation, as the realization of Divine Truth comes only through our own efforts, and is proportioned to our Faith.

"Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labor."—**1** *Cor. III.*8.

Taking into consideration the many wonderful accomplishments attained by the ancient gatherers of intelligence and builders of character, and the fact that man is a reasonable and progressive be-

ing, whose greatest achievements must be credited as a reward for his efforts in developing the talents with which he has been endowed, it would be ridiculous to assume that Nature has extended partiality toward any particular generation.

> "Say not thou, What is the *cause* that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this."—*Eccl. VII.*10.

The famous maxim "Man know Thyself" inscribed on the walls of Delphi by an unknown hand, is perhaps the greatest mandate ever known, and still stands for the most perfect realization of God's precept vouchsafed to man.

The real meaning of this inscription can be little doubted, as the builders of character among the ancients must be credited with achievements which still mystify the intellectual giants of the present age, and the accomplishment of Divine Realization by the Prophets and Apostles have excited the curiosity and amazement of mankind for centuries until now we find believers and unbelievers by the million standing upon tiptoe looking for a solution and an explanation of the Scriptures and the origin of them.

The man who wants to know that there will be a substantial result (material) in sight before he is willing to do anything

by which he might receive the blessings of God merely represents the human mind unrestrained by Better and Higher promptings which is naturally vain, envious, selfish and sensual; it seeks wealth and fame, honor and notoriety and willingly sacrifices the man for the things, saying, These I can use to my enjoyment and comfort, which impersonates the materialistic miser piling his treasures upon the earth "where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal" by which he has neglected to prepare for a home

"in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal."—*Matt. VI.* 20.

The dominancy of this Mammonic principle in man places him on the perilous ledge of existence, hurling the lariat of Satanic greed around the neck of the "Golden Calf" and typifies one of the two masters man may serve; and well illustrates the "Judas Iscariot" demanding his thirty shekels of silver in advance, but willing to give up the idea when he found that it was *his Savior* and *his Redeemer* that this principle had crucified. So in the allegory he returned the money, thereby acknowledging his mistake.

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."—*Matt. VI.*24.

We should understand that there is no evil in possessing a goodly amount of money, but the sin is in neglecting our own salvation by making money our God, thus serving Mammon with all our hearts; for by devoting our entire efforts to acquiring wealth we certainly have no time remaining to cultivate the High Principles leading to Life, by which every man may become his own prophet, and "prophesy according to the proportion of faith." *Rom. XII.6.*

And yet, in this age of enlightenment, we find that those devoting a portion of their time to Christian work are usually "reviled" and "persecuted" by the

servants of Mammon who still possess the Jewish idea of sin, which is now somewhat over two thousand years out of date.

"For so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."—*Matt. V.*12.

That which is not understood requires an effort of man before it is overcome; and the Lord helps only those willing to help themselves.

We cannot expect to learn without being instructed or find our destination without understanding the "Way" to it, and without understanding the Bible one cannot expect to know any more about his own soul than a student of

physiology could expect to know about his physical body without the use of a text book; and yet, without this information, claims are being made that the present century is the equal of any preceding one in climbing the ladder of intelligence; but with due regard for the present exalted state of civilization, we are still open to instruction at the hands of our great and gifted progenitors.

"Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God."—*Job XXXVII.*14.

"Ill deeds are doubled with an evil word."—*Shakespeare.*

"Where the speech is corrupted, the mind is also."—*Seneca.*

"There are thousands hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the root."—*Thoreau.*

"A man can no more be a Christian without facing evil and conquering it, than he can be a soldier without going to battle."—*Chapin.*

CULTIVATING OUR FIELD.

"The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:"—*Matt. XIII.*24.

Every man may properly be compared to a field wherein we are certain to find an unprofitable growth, called weeds, which, if allowed to thrive will prevent the natural and necessary development of a good product. This spontaneous growth must be continually uprooted and turned under by cultivation until the "corn" is sufficiently strong to per-

fect itself amid the ravages of adverse surroundings.

The task of uprooting is easily accomplished when the weeds are small and the roots short, but by neglecting to cultivate the "good product," the weeds becoming strong and powerful soon prevail, and the field produces nothing but an evil growth which is a disgrace to the community. By allowing their iniquitous seeds to scatter they so hamper the future generations that the "good product" is finally overcome by evil or becomes extinct.

"Therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."—*Deut. XXX.* 19.

It is the duty of every man to cultivate his own field and fulfill the Divine Law by bearing his own burden, and "Cast away from you all transgressions, whereby you have transgressed."—*Ezek. XVIII.*31, thus affording every individual the accomplishment of a great work, relieving the few from carrying a burden which should be borne by all, and making it comparatively easy to subdue evil.

"The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom:"—*Matt. XIII.*38.

Evil is not prevented or abolished by telling a man that he is bad.

"For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not."—*Eccl. VII.*20.

Many insinuations have been cast, indicating the prevailing idea that censure will destroy that which has been censured, we should understand, however, that evil will not kill evil, but multiply it. Therefore we are not to judge our fellow-man, or behold the "mote" in his eye, "first cast out the beam out of thine own eye and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."—*Matt. VII.*5. This teaches us

where the "mote" really is, although we may disbelieve it. The sinful eye sees sinful things, therefore eradicate *"this eye"* and no fault exists, as creation is perfect.

By beginning to exterminate evil at its source in our own hearts, we find the only effective and enduring manner by which the world may be cleansed from sin, and each individual receive the Comforter. All evil is destroyed by each man destroying that which is within himself. This is the teaching of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount.

The Bible teaches the invariability of nature, and its characters stand as great

object lessons intended for our benefit and guide today, tomorrow and throughout all time; but we, like the Jews of old, are unaware of its true meaning until we are enabled to realize it as Judas Iscariot did, after which we are willing to acknowledge our errors.

"There is no new thing under the sun."
—*Eccl. I.9.*

Man, being a volitional creature, and possessing the power of choice has a "RULER" within himself which determines the choice. The "good" and "evil" propensities of man are always averse and contrary and wage a contin-

ual warfare for supremacy and dominion in the battle ground of the human heart where the "tempter" and the "tempted" meet, and where Satan is vanquished by Christ.

> "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."—*Matt. V.*17.

The Biblical "Pilate" represents a principle or factor *in* and *of* man, symbolizing the dictator or ruler of the will power, and as "our ruler" determines WHICH of these two great factors, playing such an important part in the existence and future welfare of every in-

dividual, shall have dominion. The wise or foolish choice our "Pilate" makes is one of tremendous moment, as we are endowed with power and may choose to crucify our Divine Nature and allow our evil propensities to run at large.

The Scriptures do not deal with temporal objects, but by losing sight of this important fact, the historical Pilate and the Jews have been indicted and convicted at the modern bar of theological belief, and the illusory conception of a tragical crucifixion of Christ has induced us to load *them* with odium and calumny, wherein we should be sufficiently enlightened to understand that

it is OUR iniquities which crucify Him and that these deserve all the censure necessary to be administered.

"The thing that hath been, it *is that* which shall be; and that which is done *is* that which shall be done."—*Eccl. I.9.*

"Religion without morality is a superstition and a curse; the only salvation for man is in the union of the two as Christianity unites them." —*Hopkins.*

"The true grandeur of humanity is in moral elevation, sustained, enlightened and decorated by the intellect of man."—*Sumner.*

"To give a man a full knowledge of true morality, I would send him to no other book than the New Testament."—*Locke.*

DEVELOPING MORALITY.

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."—*Rom. XII.*21.

According to the Scriptures we find that new faculties are developed by cultivating a field called MORALITY.

This field has been considered an old one, in which we all profess to be workers, but the results show that the wrong field has been entered and cultivated, which necessitates our looking in an opposite direction, where the great cyno-

sure of Christianity may be seen and the laborers prevented from gathering thorns in a field of sin.

A mushroom may spring up in one night but the plant resulting from morality is eternal and requires time and labor to produce and garner into possession, but the value of it exceeds all the doctrines and theories of mushroom growth that ever did or ever will exist.

This "plant" is a peculiar one and when possessed its owner realizes the GREAT value of it, and this is why it is not to be cast before swine, for they will not understand it and will trample it under foot.

Morality, as applied to ourselves, represents the care bestowed upon the vine which enables it to produce the fruit. Morality will produce a Christian, but some believe that Christianity is smaller than morality and that Christianity comes before morality but this places the cart before the horse and supplants the Home by the path leading to it. A man was never inspired by the Spirit of God without first purging the heart with the cleansing waters of morality.

When the doors of the heart open and true Christianity enters we will understand that MORALITY turned the key,

and that we have the Friend and Comforter that has been the solace of millions in all ages.

"A friend that sticketh closer than a brother."—*Prov. XVIII.*24.

Nature is always patient and faithfully struggles to correct the defects thrust upon her creatures through accident or inadvertence and we should lend our assistance by refusing to court abnormality as a natural method of development, but fully realize the enormity of it as applied to either the body or the mind.

The claim that the future life is best known under *abnormal* conditions has

been advanced and entertained by many, but any one allowing himself to harbor such ideas may as well assume that TRUE theology emanated from an asylum.

These modern seers may be very wise in making claims that *their* discoveries has placed the Bible upon a sure and solid foundation and according to their ideas a greater hold on the "OLD BOOK" will be necessary to prevent "new sects" from springing up and taking away "both our place and nation" under the forms of worship dictated by "reason" instead of revelation.

But from the fact that "sects" have

indulged only in the antics of "springing up" and subsisted for a time on the "husks" common to the "prodigal son" the world still recognizes Christianity as the pasture to which the multitudes turn with hungry souls after feeding upon "sect ideas."

"Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners."—1 *Cor. XV.* 33.

Personal views and opinions amount to no more at this late date than at the time Voltaire is said to have remarked, "I am tired of hearing it repeated that twelve men were sufficient to found Christianity; I will show the world that

one man is sufficient to destroy it," still Christianity exists and is so great that derogatory insinuations made by those knowing so little about it has been entirely forgotten.

There is no conceivable reason as far as logic is concerned why a blade of grass should grow, or why the planets appear and disappear with unerring regularity. We know these things to exist, but *why* they exist, or why we exist is beyond the pale of logic, and *reasons given* for certain creations now existing or to exist in the future is merely giving reasons when there are none to give.

We can figure out the problems of life logically but the logic gives us no satisfaction, and we know the problem has not been solved and continue figuring. But when we have solved it correctly we know it at once, and cease gathering theories of others for adoption and rest in the true Light.

"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines."—*Heb. XIII.*9.

Let us not have the mind of doubting Thomas but be "faithful and believing," as all we can expect to learn about these things, until we "*know*" for ourselves, must be accepted from the experience of others, which, by the allegory, we are

taught was a great impediment to Thomas.

> "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." —*Prov. XXVII.*17.

This alone should be sufficient to teach us that the true meaning of the Bible is lost by clinging to traditional beliefs, which are certain to create a false impression not suitable as a foundation upon which to build the superstructure of our hopes.

> "The commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life."—*Prov. VI.* 23.

Morality consists in strict obedi-

ence to the mandates of a righteous judge called CONSCIENCE, who always presides and willingly informs us the "Way," nevertheless he is often disobeyed and we transfer our welfare to his antagonist, and thus abandon the equities of conscience and serve Satan by entertaining the degrading principles of corruption.

Many believe they cannot live without Satan, especially in the business world, but rich and poor from time immemorial have said that nothing was ever added to the world or gained by the individual members of it by dishonesty, and if their experience is a worthy criterion for us

we are certainly welcome to the information. Dishonesty will make a man so small as to be invisible to his closest neighbor.

By adhering to the promptings of the righteous judge the importance of his rulings for our welfare becomes more and more apparent until we are finally absolved from the last spot of iniquity, and our temple is cleansed and purified, when the heart is "born again" and receives the true realization of Eternal Life, which pierces the "vail" according to 2 *Cor. III.*16.

"In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death."—*Prov. XII.*28.

A proverb may contain a perfect expression but a misconstruction placed upon it will not permit it to harmonize with anything in creation, and the mind following it will never see anything in it until it is willing to banish the phantom for the reality.

Knowledge is acquired by being reasonable, and if we expect to understand the Bible by being unreasonable we will see nothing in it, and this fact should serve as an object-lesson to us, indicating a caliber of perception too small to retain as a jewel for exhibition.

The understanding is bewildered, smothered and at last forced to give up

in despair in an attempt to make a reality out of a false belief, for the mind is a perfect creation and all attempts to make it believe an unreasonable thing is a natural impossibility.

Remorse and shame will flush the cheek at even an attempt to harbor and defend a suggestion contrary to "our sense of truth" which always asserts itself at the time of choice between good and evil.

We should therefore seek to attain a high degree of Divine Knowledge, by looking into the Bible to strengthen our understanding, which will enable us to banish the false belief of our inability to

live and fulfill commands of unspeakable significance which lead to our destination, for

> "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven."—*Matt. XIII.*11.

Throughout the Scriptures, expressing the work of many hands, there is no conflict in its inspired sense, from Genesis to Revelation, the proof of which has been a marvel to all ages and has given the work a place without a rival in the field of literature; therefore in looking at the Bible as a mysterious work, we are simply misinterpreting its meaning, the fault not being in the text

but in our understanding of it, most of us failing to realize the altitude of human attainment by which its sayings were conceived, which would fully enable us to read it with understanding.

Harmony and truth are basic principles of the universe and a religious fact will always fit a scientific fact, but is sure to wreck a train of false ideas wherever found.

Science teaches us that water is *always* water, no matter in what form it may be disguised, whether in liquid, steam or ice, or whether it be absorbed by the rays of the sun and pass entirely beyond our sight.

It ridicules the idea of extinction regardless of appearances, and defends the stability of Nature, which preserves the identity of all forms and forces, thoroughly demonstrating that nothing is taken from or added to the universe.

Appearances may change but the elements constituting the combination never have, and never will, change. A man's body is composed of dust, but it is not the man. The body is merely, "the temple from which the Spirit speaks." —*John II.*21. The Spirit is Life, while the body is dust.

"There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."—1 *Cor. XV.*44.

We should take heed and avoid the Jewish mistake of assuming the BODY to be the SPIRIT. The association of these two elements, or the parting of them, does not destroy the identity of either, and the greater is not dependent upon the lesser for existence.

"Is not the life more than meat?"—*Matt. VI.*25.

What is life today will be life tomorrow, and continue to be throughout all eternity.

"Judge not according to appearances, but judge righteous judgment."—*John VII.*24.

The Bible is the Book of Life, and

deals with nothing except the principles of it.

All the various principles found in the universe of nature are absolutely changeless, and the Bible deals with principles instead of the appearances, therefore the PRINCIPLE taught by the Bible is the keynote sounding the death-knell of traditional ideas, by which man is given the choice of a thousand creeds, any one of which purports to be the "only" true theory upon which to feed the soul to insure it a seat at the right hand of its Creator.

"Henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine."—*Eph. IV.*14

"OLOGIES" AND "ISMS."

"Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures."—*Matt. XXII.*29.

We should understand the mind, but we should not allow it to be killed by the imagination; moreover we are still in the natural world and are not supposed to support the body on intangibility.

Predictions that we will maintain the human body without eating has no sanction in the economy of God, and is but the echo of an aberrated mind.

"Every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour."—*Eccl. III.*13.

The Life that is supported by Faith does not refer to our body of flesh and blood, but to the soul which may be evolved into Life, thereby becoming self-existent and eternal like its Maker.

"The liberal soul shall be made fat."—*Prov.XI.*25.

Modern discoveries have exceeded the expectations of the most sanguine, but among them are to be found many degenerating and useless fascinations. The domain of the mind has been invaded, and the human reason suppressed by occult and esoteric hallucinations; and nearly all the "ologies" and "isms" floating about claim to be supported by

the Bible, the adherents of them placing a construction upon the Scriptures serving as ballast.

Mesmerism is the father of hypnotism and hypnotism created suggestive therapeutics; so healing by suggestion has been heralded throughout the world, and the hypnotist is not unknown even among the heathen. Suggestion and auto-suggestion is the acme of perfection as long as a man is not sick, and large doses of it produce antipathy for pathology and its alteratives, resulting in obstinacy and stubbornness by which thousands have sacrificed the lives of themselves and their children.

Fools and idiots cannot be hypnotized as they have no receiver in which a suggestion may be put, and the wise man cannot be hypnotized against his will, thus, through the kindness of Nature, every man in this respect is his own king and not subject to baneful influences except by his own choice.

As no one is able to reach down and pick the snakes out of a drunkard's boots the most effective way remaining is to show him how he can take them out himself, and if a man lacks the will power to leave off drinking, chewing tobacco and other vices, it is not supplied by hypnosis, but by a little greater courage

and a stronger effort of his own, and if he is unable to do this he is too foolish to be hypnotized or healed by psychotherapeutics.

Although the hypnotist never parts with any of his mentality to the subject he treats, yet each degenerate by the misuse and abuse of nature's gifts until the former becomes an idiotic nuisance and the latter a helpless victim of anyone desiring a public display of foolishness.

Psychologists have divided the mentality into two spheres with "assumption" for the dividing line, and to prove the assumption we are invited to take

into consideration and carefully view the "divisions" of anatomy.

Literature on the so-called "objective" and "subjective" minds of man, and the functions and duties accredited to each, have been read with much interest, but why an imaginary line should be conceived as existing in one mind, and a part of it designated mortal and the other immortal is an anomaly lacking the support of any hypothesis known to logic.

A living chicken cannot be produced from half an egg, but if both halves be together and the line of division between them only imaginary, the imagination

will neither aid nor prevent its unfoldment into a living creature. Unimportant errors never reverse a case, and though they may be the chief bone of contention among the litigants the court of appeals refuses to consider them altogether.

If it were possible to leave alone the fads and illusions of the day long enough to get our true bearings, and then go by the Light given us in the Bible we would know a few things for ourselves, and would neither be the dupes of suggestion nor ragbags for delusions.

The idea of the immortal soul being dependent upon some outside half of

itself for an auto-suggestion to insure its immortality is a blow at the Higher forces with the hammer of materialism, having a vibration too low to be heard by worthy people.

The ridiculous theory that the immortality of a child depends upon an auto-suggestion from its sense mind to its other half, which is termed the soul, must have been conceived in the awful dream that sometime the mighty law of SUGGESTION might be lost and all men drift into perdition.

Revelation is better than telepathy, and makes no false vibrations on the ear. It is easy to dream that we hear a voice

a hundred miles away but before we see it demonstrated we will see greater things than telepathy and will understand that it is not a fact.

The Bible teaches us concerning the "natural" and "spiritual" minds of men, but the "modern sages" prefer to "speculate" and tell us what the Spiritual mind is, and in these attempts we find them all hanging themselves with their own ropes.

By the laws of nature we find that nothing is done by halves;

> "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."—1 *Cor. XIII.*10.

The natural mind is whole and complete in itself, and is no part of the spiritual mind. To illustrate: An egg is an egg, but is no part of the chicken coming from it. First the egg and then the chicken, but without taking any pains to bring the chickens forth through the necessary process of incubation, the egg becomes stale and finally descends to the lowest regions, not because there was any fault in the egg, but because we permitted it to go to waste. The natural mind of man represents the egg, while the Spiritual mind represents the "LIVING THING" coming from it, therefore in hatching our eggs we should

not wait until they die, expecting chickens from bad eggs.

By "unfolding," the egg does not die but comes to life, and represents the plan of salvation which is to be followed out by man to realize and enjoy the great Truth of Christianity, whereby he is

> "passed from death into life."—*John V.*24.

The psychologists represent the egg trying to tell about the chicken, which is an impossibility, while the Apostle represents the CHICKEN, which has a knowledge of what is IN the egg. We represent the eggs.

Order pervades the universe. The "natural mind" comes first and then the spiritual.—*I Cor. XV.*44-46. The great majority are still "naturally minded," but some have evolved sufficiently into LIFE to peep through the shells where NEW things are seen and understood by the NEW creatures which Christianity brings forth.

> "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."—2 *Cor. V.*17.

This represents, and illustrates, the coming forth of our REAL LIFE and is called the FIRST GREAT MIRACLE in the life of man, being symbolized in the Bible by the CHANGING of the water into WINE.

Wine is still used in the sacrament to denote this GREAT LIFE which is intended for the mortal aid of those willing to accept it.

In the spring-time when all nature begins to awaken from the winter's slumber we have OUR "Easter Day" and we thus perpetuate the true idea of our own unfoldment into LIFE, using an egg to illustrate the manner of it.

This is the most perfect symbol of the resurrection known to figurative custom, and the true MEANING of Easter Day should not be lost; therefore do not lose yourself but receive the "Crown of Life" by RESURRECTING your mind after

the manner indicated by the symbols, and

> "be renewed in the spirit of your mind."—*Eph. IV.*23.

Perhaps there is no parable of the Bible more confusing and less understood than that of "Lazarus and his resurrection," but before launching out into the mid-ocean of understanding we are expected to know something about the details leading to it, and by understanding the simple things first we will find ourselves better equipped to cope with the Greater Work. This process has always been found necessary, and the lack of a little patience, where much

is required, has left the world with but a superficial understanding of the Bible, which compares its inhabitants with birds having wings, but with no knowledge of how to use them.

The traditional idea of "resurrection" has not only led the simple, but many of the wise, back into the wilderness of Egyptian darkness where each conceived imaginations without foundation or truth, either in Scripture or Nature. God does not violate His own laws, which have been unchangeable throughout all time; and before we can clearly understand the Scriptures it is necessary to brush away the mental cob-

webs resulting from pious credulity. The enlightenment of man, and the scientific demonstrations of the world during the last century has turned a great search-light into the caves and caverns of religious monstrosities and revealed their fantastical nature, and today a man is not a Christian on account of his superstitions but because he knows and understands what it really is.

The Scripture words constitute a Light which if followed leads to Eternal Life, but without knowing anything about it we have no knowledge of the "Way," or even the least conception of the meaning of the Book. The Bible is

the physiology of the soul, under whose precepts it develops into self-consciousness, as an infant evolves into a personal knowledge of its own living being, not at one time possessed, although living. The soul, like the infant, is alive but the study and understanding of the Bible *quickens* it into the self-knowledge of its own life, and this is called ETERNAL LIFE.

All ages have produced men and women to whom the science of the soul has yielded its mysteries, but the stringency of laws relating to the exposition of ethereal Truth has been so pronounced, and the penalties so severe and shock-

ing as to leave us with but fragments of a science which should be in possession of every individual.

This science relates to the "Higher State" of existence for man instead of "theories" about it.

As the Bible is not based upon "theory" we should not seek among theoretical elements expecting to find an explanation of its teachings, but adhere strictly to the Scriptures as they relate to the fundamental principles in the REAL LIFE of man, which to understand and live is to fulfill; it is the guide for every reader on the journey and bears practical results by giving man a

knowledge of LIFE while he is yet living that he may continue to LIVE; this being its aim, and the truth of it having been demonstrated we should consider it of sufficient importance to elicit the attention of all men at least to some degree.

Time is too valuable for us to consume our talents in considering and promulgating fanciful doctrines which fade away and leave us no shelter in the time of storm, and to believe in them does your soul no more good than the reading of a book of fairy tales.

The soul is the "pearl of great price."

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."—*Matt. XIII.*45-46.

The "kingdom of heaven" represents the soul which the Apostle describes as being "within us" and to find the pearl is to enter the kingdom of heaven, which the Prophets and Apostles did preceding their earthly demise and commanded us to do likewise.

The mission of the Master was to Redeem and Save us by showing us the "Way" to save ourselves, which is clearly pointed out that we may have

positive knowledge upon the greatest of all problems.

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"—*Matt. XVI.*26.

Misunderstanding, disbelief and credulity have been the ruling factors and millions are standing as Christians without knowing why they stand and are overcome by the "great destroyer" instead of overcoming it, as the early Christians did by the practicality of Christianity.

"The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going."—*Prov. XIV.*15.

The Creator has given every man a head which is supposed to be filled by himself with intelligence and wisdom, and not merely kept as an empty receptacle for receiving and reverberating the ideas of other men who may have large heads "puffed up by vanity"

> "They trust in vanity, and speak lies."
> *Is. LIX.*4.

expressing the fascinating but narrow ideas which have resulted in such great disaster to the millions of small and wavering "ones" who have agreed with them because "it's so soothing and restful" to allow the brains of others to carry the intelligence.

Therefore the multitude continually allow themselves to be fleeced by the shepherds of vanity, not only of the daily stipend so necessary for temporal advancement and physical maintenance, but are induced to take stock in monstrous claims, by which the mission of the Savior is usurped by those assuming to be a reincarnation of some parabolical prophet ingeniously professing to possess the power to Save.

> "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs of wonders; in so much that, if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect."—*Matt. XXIV.*23-24.

By depending upon them to lead us into the "Promised Land" we not only forsake the Master and his precepts, but our own culture, individuality and manhood and sell the birthright of our soul's redemption to "ravening wolves" for a "morsel of meat," and become the dependent and helpless sheep which are scattered and lost.

> "And thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Savior and thy Redeemer."—*Isaiah LX.*16.

Those possessing mental freaks claim an irreconcilable conflict between science and religion, but this reminds one of the schoolboy who was so certain

he had solved the problem correctly that he questioned the veracity of the numbers.

These Solons of intelligence may know something about science and a little about religion, but if they understood either the one or the other they would know that there is no conflict between them. Sometimes we find them possessing great knowledge of science but applying the facts of it to religious illusions which "they" call facts, which results in a small idea, which, when expressed, determines the size of the head and dispenses with the phrenological tape commonly used for the purpose.

"Strong reasons make strong actions. Good reasons must, of course, give place to better."—*Shakespeare.*

"Reason is our intellectual eye, and like the bodily eye it needs light to see; and to see clearly and far it needs the light of Heaven."

"God, who has given the Bible, has also given us our reason with which to examine and understand it; and we are guilty before Him if we bury this talent in the earth and hide our Lord's money."—*Clarke.*

THE REASONS WHY.

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."—*Rom. XIV.*5.

The idea entertained and more or less exploited that the true understanding of the Bible has been purposely veiled from the human mind, for the reason that it would be inexpedient to divulge it, certainly savors of the same selfish strain exhibited by the old time family prayer, for "us four and no more."

This assumption is too narrow and ridiculous to be seriously considered, as

its truth would prevent the sinner from a knowledge of the very thing intended for his own salvation. Wherever this idea originated it has had a signal influence upon those who neglect to find out for themselves that such is not the case.

Investigation shows us, however, that one acquires no impression of the "hidden wisdom" of the Bible by attempting to consider it a relation of historical miracles; and those viewing it from a literal and historical point of view can gain no clearer idea of it than the children of Israel had of the sayings of Moses; still after reading parts of it we find this class exhibiting their "carnal

minds'' to the public by antagonizing the reading of it even in the schools of learning.

> ''The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him.''—1 *Cor. II.*14.

Numberless readers have been exceedingly amazed because they could not acquire a true knowledge of the Old Testament, entirely overlooking the necessity of attaching any significance to such plain language as used in II Cor. III. 12-16, wherein it plainly states that ''until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the Old

Testament,'' also telling how this ''vail'' shall be taken away; and in the same chapter informs us, in words equally plain that ''the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance'' and that ''their minds were blinded.'' The same meaning of which is derived from the Old Testament, Exodus XXXIV. 29-35, wherein it states that ''all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone,'' ''and till Moses had done speaking with them he put a vail on his face.'' In binding these facts together with the explanation given in Eccl. VIII.1 where we find

stated that "a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed," we certainly should be able to derive some explanation as to the reason why the face of Moses presented the symbolized appearance to the children of Israel.

The great mistake is made in trying to understand all the parables and allegories used in the Scriptures without taking into consideration such important passages as found in I Cor. I.19-29, wherein it is plainly stated that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise"; "the weak things of the world to confound the

things which are mighty"; "base things of the world and things which are despised," "yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are," and yet people try to imagine historical characters to fit fanciful ideas and continue to believe in traditional events, attempting to grasp the entire scope of the Scriptures by an immediate conclusion too shallow to comprehend the depth of inspiration they contain, wherein they should only attempt to progress step by step to the end of the journey, which is the true method, and is certain to be slow but safe.

"Because they sought it not by faith," "they stumbled at that stumbling stone."—*Romans IX.*32.

Most of us seem to overlook the fact that the strength of our faith has "everything" to do with our understanding of the Scriptures. Therefore we should take into consideration the fact that unless we are willing to accept the DIVINE truth embodied in Scripture teachings and realize its true meaning we are still among those "without" who are only able to view them as parables "that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand."—*Luke VIII.*10. For

> "Unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables."—*Mark IV.*11.

Those expecting Divine Wisdom without "turning to the Lord" by a study of His Word in the Scriptures, represent the "Children" fishing on the wrong side of the boat, catching nothing all night, but by hearkening to the voice of the Master they cast their net on the RIGHT side, and the grand result is symbolized and recorded in the last chapter of John.

> "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"—1 *John III.*1.

By banishing limited and primitive ideas from the mind and opening a will-

ing and receptive heart, the "Light" will soon come into it, and you will know more about him in a single moment by His presence than by ages of scholastic speculation.

> "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—*Col. III.*4.

You can only be told how you may know him for yourself, and it then remains with you to decide whether you will or not.

> "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."—*John VII.*17.

No one can see Him for you, or adequately depict the glory of His presence, for all these things are accomplished through Faith.

"We have not followed cunning devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 *Peter I.*16.

GUESSING AND KNOWING.

"After that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."—*Gal. III.*25.

No man can talk intelligently upon a subject he knows nothing about, and the intuitive perception of mankind is so keen and accurate as to detect and repel the errors although it may be impossible to give reasons therefor.

Any one can make a guess, but if you know a thing you have no hesitancy in stating it to be a fact—as a scholar de-

clares twice eight to be sixteen and has no misgivings as to its truth—but the one not knowing can only speculate until he has acquired the necessary knowledge.

One knows and the other does not; one speaks according to his knowledge, while the other speaks words of uncertainty.

By reading a few religious statements made by different characters in the world's history, we can understand very quickly whether they "possessed" Christianity or only had ideas about it.

The world has always had three classes of people: One knowing noth-

ing whatever about Christianity, another that knew all about it, and still a larger class that knew something about it.

The ones knowing "all" about it spoke according to their knowledge, and the ones knowing nothing about it have said "nothing" about it, although they have made many attempts to. The others have had more or less knowledge of it, some reflecting small rays, while the greater possessions of it have always reflected larger ones. The manner in which the small light afforded by the intellect is overcome by another so much greater as to make the small one appear

"blind" is beautifully symbolized by the Great Light which came to Saul on his way to Damascus by which the "natural" or "carnal" mind became a *servant* to the "spiritual mind." This typifies the *true* CONVERSION in store for all men by which they become endowed with NEW faculties. NEW creatures are deserving of a new name; as symbolized by Saul's conversion after which he was called PAUL.

> "To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."—*Rom. VIII.6.*

After this event in life man no longer condescends to be led by the "small

light," but takes the lead and says, "Follow Me." The Bible refers exclusively to the GREAT LIGHT, while history is the result of events connected with the domains viewed by the "small one."

"Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you."—*John XII.* 35.

We have been pleadingly asked to do His will, that we might enjoy the blessings of a higher state of existence, therefore let us feed the soul with the "Bread from Heaven" until it blooms into perfection and embodies the Eternal Knowledge of Life, uncontaminated and un-

fettered by tangling creeds, sheltered by the intellects and supported by the purses of men.

> "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."—*Matt. VI.*6.

The prevailing idea that Christianity is a belief instead of a FACT has had much to do in curtailing the knowledge of it.

The belief of Christianity to be a mere code of ethics or mythical hope, the reward of which is beyond the tomb instead

of NOW, WHEN WE NEED IT, is one of the most successful illusions ever perpetuated by posterity.

"There is no knowledge" "nor wisdom, in the grave."—*Eccl. IX.*10.

The idea of WAITING until we are dead for a Savior is too ridiculous to be entertained as a common heritage among enlightened nations.

The Bible teaches that we are to know our Savior *now,* but this seems to be questioned by those expecting to die and be saved after death.

"If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness." —*Job. XVII.*13.

The reward of the doubter is distant, while it is comparatively easy for the Faithful to find the treasure, and in looking back over the centuries we find that every age and generation to some extent, have found the Hidden Treasure and been inspired by His Light, and we have their writings concerning Him in sixty-six books.

"Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail."—*Isaiah XXXIV.*16.

If we prefer to ignore these truths under the present advantages of enlightenment within the reach of all, we are

merely looking for someone to save us instead of saving ourselves.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this *is* the whole *duty* of man."—*Eccl. XII.*13.

THUS ENDETH OUR FIRST LESSON.

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."—1 *Cor. XV.*51.

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